



## Mobile music can trump piracy

**Blackberry and Apple have showed how to make data services fly on mobile. The rest of the industry should apply their example to mobile music, says Rob Lewis, CEO of Omnifone...**

P2P file sharing is ten years old, and in that time Europeans have grown used to sideloading and sharing tracks with friends via Bluetooth. As a result, piracy now accounts for 95 per cent of digital music downloads.

But P2P is flawed. Users face viruses, poor quality content, corrupted meta-data, missing artwork – and they always have to sideload. Yet the paid-for alternatives have been less than compelling thanks to clunky WAP user interfaces, unpredictable data charges and (again) sideloading. Still, there's hope. Research says 69 per cent of 12-18 year-olds have listened to music on their phones, even if barely one in ten consumers has ever downloaded a track.

Happily, mobile music can be better than piracy. We can provide unlimited access to millions of tracks, with the ability to discover, play, recommend and share – all of it over the air. But to genuinely win people over, we need more than great functionality, we need an experience consumers adore. That's the greatest challenge.



Consumers are more likely to use a service that's fully integrated into a device, with a UI and menu structure perfectly aligned to the phone's regular functions. Look at the success of Apple's AppStore over operators' WAP stores to see the difference. Apple sells ten times more apps every day than every operator in the world together.

It can be done. Blackberry did it for email, and the carriers saw huge revenue benefits. Do it right, and the consumers will respond en masse.